



JIM DOYLE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF WISCONSIN

August 29, 2008

Mr. Byron Zuidema, Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
230 South Dearborn Street, 6th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604

Dear Mr. Zuidema:

I am requesting the U.S. Department of Labor's approval of five waiver requests for the State of Wisconsin related to the Workforce Investment Act. I appreciate the Department's encouragement to submit waiver plans in order to improve the effectiveness of our workforce programs.

I recently launched my *Grow Wisconsin – The Next Steps* strategic plan to take Wisconsin's economy to the next level. My plan provides a package of initiatives that will drive innovation, foster growth and give business fertile ground to develop and flourish. To ensure the success of this plan, we must compete at the high end, upgrading and advancing our bedrock industries, including manufacturing and agriculture. We must also invest in emerging industries like bio-technology and position our state for leadership and job growth in exciting new markets.

An educated and skilled workforce is essential to meeting the needs of business. Approval of this waiver request will make our public workforce development system more responsive for a competitive business climate and also reflects my Council on Workforce Investment's (CWI) recommendations for added accountability and transparency.

Grow Wisconsin-The Next Steps is based on two earlier *Grow Initiatives* that included the CWI's grants to local areas for region-wide workforce system integration and coordination with major economic development and education initiatives. These projects transformed the State's eleven workforce development areas into seven *Grow* grant regions for improved regional partner strategic planning, employer-linkage activities and industry cluster efforts. As Wisconsin continues to realign workforce activities on a regional basis, the silo-program mentality that created service delivery constraints is being transformed. I believe these waivers will help reshape and unify our partner discussions across programs.

The *Grow* activities also dovetail the Workforce Innovation Regional Economic Development (WIRED) DOL awards, which are being implemented in the southern third of our state. Approval of these waivers would help our WIRED regions accomplish their important work.

I am interested in having these waiver requests reviewed and approved by DOL as expeditiously as possible for implementation in program year 2008-2009.

Thank you for your consideration of these waivers. Please contact the State's WIA Liaison and CWI Executive Director, Ron Danowski, as noted in the attached State Waiver Plan for further follow-up.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Doyle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jim" and last name "Doyle" clearly distinguishable.

Jim Doyle
Governor